

HUBER+SUHNER: Shareholder-friendly dividend policy and appointment of CEO successor

At yesterday's meeting, the Board of Directors of the HUBER+SUHNER Group adopted a new, very shareholder-friendly dividend policy. It also nominated the head of the division Fiber Optics, Urs Ryffel, as CEO of the HUBER+SUHNER Group as of 1 April 2017. As previously announced, the proposal will at the same time be made to the Annual General Meeting to elect the long-standing CEO and delegate of the Board of Directors, Urs Kaufmann, as Chairman of the Board of Directors.

Shareholder-friendly dividend policy

HUBER+SUHNER has a very strong balance-sheet structure and has in the past few years been able to maintain a high level of net liquidity thanks to positive cash flows and despite acquisitions implemented. In view of this situation, the Board of Directors dealt with the subject of future dividend policy. It decided to retain the income-based approach and the defined disbursement ratio of 40 to 50% of net income. A dividend of at least CHF 1.00 per share is now envisaged. This means that in financial years where the maximum disbursement ratio of 50% generates less than CHF 1.00 per share, a dividend of CHF 1.00 will be proposed to the following Annual General Meeting. As a result of the strong financial basis, HUBER+SUHNER can finance this disbursement policy on the basis of its own resources. This results in a sustainable, attractive minimum yield for shareholders.

Early appointment of a successor

In order to ensure long-term succession planning, it was decided already in February 2015 that, in view of the 2017 Annual General Meeting, the current CEO, Urs Kaufmann, would resign from his operational remit and be proposed for election as Chairman of the Board of Directors. The current Chairman of the Board of Directors, Beat Kälin, will resign from his office at this point in time. He will, however, continue to serve as a member of the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors appointed Urs Ryffel as CEO as of 1 April 2017. Urs Ryffel, (Swiss citizen, born 1967, Dipl. Ing. ETH) has been employed by the HUBER+SUHNER Group since 2002. As a highly qualified and internationally experienced executive, he has a record of considerable achievements in a number of different roles at the HUBER+SUHNER Group. As a member of the Executive Group Management, he has headed the division Fiber Optics since 2007. Over the past nine years and under the management of Urs Ryffel, Fiber Optics has developed into the largest and most profitable segment of the HUBER+SUHNER Group. His professional career is described in the enclosed brief curriculum vitae.

The Board of Directors welcomes this early appointment of successors at the top of the group. In the interests of continuity, it is also delighted to be able to appoint highly experienced managers from its own ranks as successors both as Chairman of the Board of Directors and in the CEO role.

This press release can be found on our homepage under Company/Media.

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Brief curriculum vitae of Urs Ryffel

1967, Swiss citizen, dipl. Ing. ETH Zürich. INSEAD Executive training, France.

From 1992 to 1999, Urs Ryffel was employed by ABB Switzerland in Baden and Zürich as a project manager, Manager of the Business Development Department at ABB Kraftwerke AG and Manager of the Hydro Power Plant Service global business unit. From 1999 to 2002, he was employed by ALSTOM as General Manager in Lisbon for the hydro power segment, then in Paris for hydro power plants and systems.

Urs Ryffel joined HUBER+SUHNER in 2002, initially as Head of the Rollers Business Unit, and from 2004 to 2007 as Head of the business unit Cable Systems. Since 2007, he has headed the division Fiber Optics and has been a member of Group Executive Management since 2008.

HUBER+SUHNER Group

HUBER+SUHNER is a global company with headquarters in Switzerland that develops and manufactures components and system solutions for electrical and optical connectivity. With cables, connectors and systems – developed from the three core technologies of radio frequency, fiber optics and low frequency – the company serves customers in the communication, transportation and industrial sectors. The products deliver high performance, quality, reliability and long life – even under harsh environment conditions. Our global production network, combined with group companies and agencies in over 60 countries, puts HUBER+SUHNER close to its customers. Further information on the company can be found at hubersuhner.com.